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Northern Region News

A Newsletter for Employees and Retirees

ISSUE 3

May - June 1998

Big Creek Prescribed Burn Did Results Meet Expectations?

by David J. Silviesu, resource team leader
Bitterroot National Forest

On April 27 and 28, Bitterroot National Forest fire managers ignited a 1,700-acre prescribed burn just northwest of Victor, Montana. The burn was planned as part of a 40,000-acre study called the Stevensville West Central Environmental Analysis. The study is a component of an even larger research effort known as the Bitterroot Ecosystem Management Research Project (BEMRP), which involves the Bitterroot National Forest, the Rocky Mountain Research Station, and the University of Montana as cooperators.

The prescribed burn had four key objectives:

- * Reduce the potential of large, high intensity wildfire
- * Reduce the risk to firefighter safety and to adjacent private lands and structures
- * Maintain forest health and restore old growth ponderosa pine
- * Improve wildlife winter range habitat

The burn was unique because of its location and because of the large-scale public involvement process prior to, during, and after the ignition. It was the largest prescribed burn conducted on the forest near the wildland/urban interface. The State of Montana, through the Sikes Act which provides funding for fish and wildlife conservation projects, partially funded the burn.

Smoke was a key concern in the planning process. Planners knew predicted weather would have to be just right in order to minimize the smoke

impact to the valley. A few days after ignition, unanticipated smoke from other fires and dust coming all the way from China and Canada filled the Bitterroot Valley with haze.

Even with these unexpected effects, early air quality monitoring results at the Stevensville Ranger Station were well within national standards. Many residents, however, did not agree. The haze obscured the views and affected people with respiratory problems.

Reviewing the results

One week after the fire, the forest's North Zone Resource Team evaluated the results and effects of the fire to see if the objectives and desired conditions were achieved. Forest health and ponderosa pine ecosystem maintenance objectives were met. Less than 30 percent of the ponderosa pine greater than 10 inches in diameter died in the blaze. Only about 5 percent of the large ponderosa pine were killed.

The burn created openings that will favor the reseeding of ponderosa pine. Many Douglas-fir were killed, especially in the smaller size classes that create ladder fuels for fire. Greater mortality



Smoke on the Bitterroot skyline from the Big Creek prescribed burn.

of the Douglas-fir would have been desirable but, given the complexity of the burn, district ranger Nan Christianson is satisfied with the results.

Watershed impacts were minimal, with 99 percent of the watershed area limited to a burn level of light intensity. This left litter layers protecting the watershed intact, which will protect soils during subsequent rain storm events. The fire did not burn in the moist riparian/stream bottom zone.

The burn accomplished the wildlife habitat objectives by reducing the conifer canopy and burning forage species over large areas. Shrubs should respond by vigorously resprouting, and the increased sunlight and moisture available due to reducing the number of competing conifers

— see Burn page 12

Lolo Salvage Sale A Showcase of Teamwork

by Marcia Hogan, public affairs officer,
Lolo National Forest.

This spring, the Lolo National Forest finished harvesting 27 million board feet of timber that was blown down in a hurricane-force windstorm on December 4, 1995. Winds reaching 100-mph speeds ripped from the ground 40 million board feet of timber.

The Lolo has worked on blowdown salvage sales for 2 1/2 years. For their efforts, the Lolo National Forest was

honored with one of only five national Salvage Sale Showcase Awards in 1997. "In my mind, the effort sustained by the Lolo National Forest in response to this windstorm is a showcase in perseverance, quality work and teamwork," said Lolo forest supervisor Charles Wildes in the application for the award.

The Lolo National Forest processed and sold the timber despite the extreme conditions of 1996—from heavy snowfall and flooding to staff downsizing. To salvage the timber from the blowdown, field crews worked 10-hour days, six days per week.

Left.
Veteran forestry
technician
Bernie Jacobs
surveys
blowdown.

These long workdays included, during January storms, more than 26 people on snowmobiles.

"This project demonstrated the creativity and efficiency that often go unnoticed in the Forest Service," said Robert Joslin, Deputy Chief of the National Forest System, in the award letter forwarded to the Lolo last fall. "Your aggressive actions and cooperative efforts clearly reflect a Salvage Sale Showcase."

Compliance with National Environmental Protection Act and other environmental regulations required intense teamwork. The Lolo prepared 12 environmental assessments and 48 categorical exclusions for the sales. The sales were also some of the first to implement the Inland Native Fish Strategy.

Another unique aspect of the sale was the cooperative efforts between the Lolo, a timber purchaser, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe to save an "Indian-marked" tree within a salvage sale. American Indians had marked the tree hundreds of years ago when they used the Nez Perce Trail. A helicopter transported the 3,000-pound section of the tree to a display at the People Center on the Flathead Reservation.

Gallatin and Custer Fisheries Reel In National Awards

by Jan Lerum, public affairs officer
Gallatin National Forest

Chief Dombeck presented 1997 "Rise to the Future" national fisheries program awards to Gallatin and Custer National Forest fisheries staff and programs for their significant contributions to aquatic resource management. The awards were presented in March at the annual North American Wildlife and National Resources Conference in Orlando, Florida.

Wally McClure and **Scot Shuler**, Gallatin National Forest, are recipients of the 1997 Rise to the Future Public Awareness Award for their contributions in communicating the national forest system aquatic resource management story. Wally is a fisheries biologist on the Bozeman and West Yellowstone Ranger Districts and Scot is a fisheries biologist on the Gardiner, Livingston, and Big Timber Ranger Districts.

L to R: Wally McClure, Bruce May, and Scot Shuler. Wally and Scot received the 1997 Rise to the Future Public Awareness Award, and Bruce was presented with the 1997 Jack Adams Award for sustained and dedicated service.



The **Custer National Forest** is the recipient of the 1997 Rise to the Future Recreational Fisheries Resource Accomplishment Award for significant accomplishments in the implementation of the Recreational Fishery Conservation Plan and Executive Order.

The recipients were selected by a panel based on demonstration of significant accomplishments in the category, integration of efforts with other program areas, scope of accomplishment considering available resources, and external collaboration.

Bruce May, zone fisheries biologist for the Gallatin and Custer National Forests is

the recipient of the 1997 Jack Adams Award for sustained and dedicated service in behalf of fish and wildlife resources on national forest system lands. Bruce, who nominated Wally, Scot, and the Custer National Forest for their awards, was not aware he was the Jack Adams recipient until his name was announced at the Orlando ceremony. Rick Stowell, fisheries program leader for the Northern Region, and Rich Inman, Gallatin resources staff officer, nominated Bruce based on his work as a professional biologist, program manager, and consensus builder.

Gloria Flora Honored

Doing Things Right and Doing the Right Thing



**Gloria
Flora**

by Robin Strathy, forest planner/geologist, and
Bonnie Dearing, public affairs specialist
Lewis and Clark National Forest.

Gloria Flora, Lewis and Clark National Forest Supervisor, has been notified by the executive director of the Natural Resources Council of America that she has been chosen to receive the 1998 National Environmental Quality Award. This highly prestigious award is given in recognition of her work to protect the Rocky Mountain Front from oil and gas leasing.

In 1997, the Forest Service released an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which evaluated several alternatives for oil and gas leasing on the Lewis and Clark National Forest. The analysis was in response to regulations implementing the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act. The act gave the Forest Service greater authority in determining which National Forest System lands would be made available for oil and gas leasing, and under what conditions.

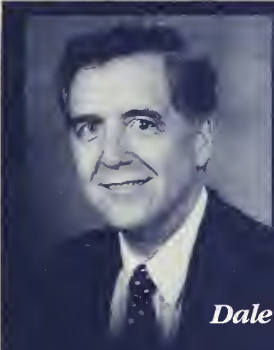
The EIS evaluated seven alternatives that considered authorizing leasing on varying acreages of land across the forest. Gloria's decision combined portions of two alternatives to disallow leasing on the Rocky Mountain Front while allowing limited leasing elsewhere on the Lewis and Clark Forest.

Oil and gas leasing and development has been a hotly contested issue on the Rocky Mountain Front for many years. The possibility of large amounts of hydrocarbon resources, combined with threatened and

endangered species habitat, scenery and recreation values, and Native American cultural values fueled many debates on the types of uses suitable for this area.

The forest received nearly 1,500 comments on the draft EIS, most of them opposing oil and gas leasing and development on the Front. "By following NEPA's guidelines for public comment and consideration of alternatives," stated the council's executive director Andrea Yank, Gloria was able "to take bold action to protect the Overthrust Belt from development."

The Natural Resources Council is an association of more than 70 environmental organizations. The National Environmental Quality Award, established by the group in 1995, is given to an individual who employs the standards and goals of the National Environmental Policy Act to preserve natural resources. Gloria will be presented the award at the 14th Annual Conservation Community Awards Banquet, June 17, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.



Dale Bosworth

A Message from the Regional Forester

In April, the Chief announced the creation of a new national grassland administrative unit in the Northern Region, formed to manage the 1.2 million acres of national grasslands previously within the boundaries of the Custer National Forest. The decision is a product of at least four years of discussion at the regional and national levels on how to better manage our national grasslands.

This unit will be the equivalent of a national forest and will include the Little Missouri, Sheyenne, and Cedar River National Grasslands in North Dakota and the Grand River National Grassland in South Dakota. The advertisement for the

grasslands supervisor, the first in the nation, is already on the streets and we will shortly come to a decision on where to locate the supervisor's office.

The Chief took the action, with our support, so that we could provide the grasslands with the level of attention this unique resource deserves. In past centuries, the native prairie grasslands of the Great Plains represented the continent's largest ecosystem, but they are now the most changed and most fragmented. Today that ecosystem is largely in private ownership and in crop production. Less than 10 percent of the northern Great Plains is in public ownership and, of that figure, less than 2 percent is within the National Forest System.

There are other unique resources within the proposed unit. The Sheyenne Ranger District in North Dakota has the largest number of threatened, endangered and sensitive plant species (TES) of any area in the region—20 percent of all TES plant species in R-1 are found in this district.

In these days of downsizing and consolidation, I know it may seem a strange time to some of you to take this action, but I believe we can establish the office with a minimum increase of funds and personnel. By sharing certain services with the Custer National Forest or other USDA offices, we can keep our expenses down and the staff size modest.

It's an important step and the right one to enhance our leadership role and provide efficient administration of the resource. Having an office in North Dakota will also improve opportunities for the public to participate in the management of the grasslands.

The decision is supported at the WO level by the assignment of one of the associate deputy chief positions who will be responsible for national grasslands. With a team effort at all levels, we will continue, as the Chief's says "to improve upon our legacy of caring for the national grasslands."

Heyn Gets Recognition from Governor



Eric Heyn

by Terri Shuey, interpretation specialist
Kootenai National Forest

At the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation held in Kalispell April 6 and 7, Governor Marc Racicot presented **Eric Heyn**, recreation forester for the Rexford Ranger District, Kootenai National Forest, with an Award of Recognition.

Eric was recognized for his contributions in increasing tourism in the Tobacco Valley. The Governor mentioned some of Eric's accomplishments when presenting the award: his involvement with writing the grant requests for foundations for the structures; installation of period street lights; replacement of the boardwalk at Eureka's Historic Village; writing a grant request under the Farm Bill for a walking tour program; and his work on the Kootenai Trail, a Rails-to-Trails project.

Eric is also a founding member of the Historic Eureka Foundation, Inc., which purchased the National Hotel to house a special collection of original journals from the mountain men of this area from the late 18th and 19th centuries. The foundation's goal is to get the National Hotel restored and onto the National Register of Historic Places.

Also mentioned was the fact that some of Eric's peers credit him with being THE reason more people are visiting their magnificent part of Montana. Thanks, Eric, for all your efforts both on and off the job and for bringing attention and recognition from the Governor's Office to the Tobacco Valley and the Forest Service.

Kris Perry Recognized for Public Involvement

by Cheryl Emch, financial manager and
Human Relations Action Committee
chairperson, Clearwater National Forest

At a recent Clearwater-Nez Perce Employee Day, recreation technician **Kris Perry**, Lochsa Ranger District, was presented with a Spice of Life award from Clearwater forest supervisor Jim Caswell for her work "in promoting cooperation and understanding within the Forest Service and the community of Kooskia."

Kris served as crew leader for forest accessibility projects such as the Lolo Creek Campground and numerous sites along the Lochsa corridor. She has been a reliable participant in the annual Native American Youth Camps and has assisted people of all abilities, ages, and backgrounds in knowing and enjoying their national forests through her continuous contacts at the Lochsa Historical Ranger Station.



Kris Perry

Her countless hours of volunteer service to the community as a member of the Kooskia Revitalization Committee contributed to the securing of an accessible chairlift for the Old Opera House, the new Emergency Services Building, the Farmers Market, and the Welcome Kiosk. Many of these projects were completed through partnerships with the forest.

Commenting on Kris's contribution, Caswell stated, "Working with the different cultures, attitudes, and interests of the people in this area to come together for common purposes is a noble accomplishment."

Regional Mineral Awards Given

by Leslie Vaculik, leasable minerals specialist, Regional Office

Three regional employees were singled out for their outstanding work in the minerals area at the 1998 Minerals Technical Meeting held in Butte April 15 and 16.

Bob Wintergerst, reclamation specialist, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, was the recipient of the 1998 R-1 Director's Award for the Minerals and Geology Program. Bob received the award for his leadership in working with the Regional Office Minerals and Engineering staffs, the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology and others to produce a quality inventory of inactive and abandoned mines in the region. He also was singled out for his commitment and dedication in fostering partnerships with the Bureau of Land Management, USGS, Montana Tech, and other Federal, State and local agencies in the pilot watershed clean-up effort of the Boulder River.

In the area of abandoned mines, **Jim**



Gary Morrison (left) director, R-1 RMLHW, presents minerals award to Bob Wintergerst.

Langdon, civil engineer, Idaho Panhandle National Forests, received the 1998 Reclamation Program Achievement Award for his development of innovative mine closure plans and his work to install a variety of closures. The mine closures range from permanent installations to gates that allow bats to continue living in the mines.

Mark Sexton, minerals area manager, Custer National Forest, received the 1998 Leasable Minerals Achievement Award for his perseverance and skill in resolving some difficult oil and gas operation related problems. He has developed excellent working relationships the industry and with other agency personnel which facilitates high quality oil and gas operations and reclaimed sites.

Lolo Volunteer Group Receives Chief's Thanks

by Bethany Meisinger, UM writer/intern
Lolo National Forest

This year's National Volunteer Week may have passed with little fanfare in some corners, but the Forest Service did not let this special event pass them by. To support this year's theme, "Volunteer! Get Connected," the Chief's 1998 Volunteers Program National Awards were presented to 57 groups nationally. **Missoula Youth Homes** will receive one of these awards for their work on the Lolo National Forest.

Missoula Youth Homes (MYH) are group homes designed to provide an array of services for children aged 2 to 18 years. The services include short-term shelter, therapeutic group homes and foster care. Every summer, the children divide their time between constructive day programs, which usually involve community service, and fun days, which might include rafting or hiking.

Five years ago, MYH approached forester Joe Kipphut, with the Missoula Ranger Dis-

trict, about their volunteering for the Lolo National Forest. Joe organized a volunteer program and has worked with MYH ever since.

For ten weeks during the summer, the children and their staff members drive to various recreation areas around Missoula. The volunteers usually donate one to two days a week for their service.

Past projects have included packing out trash, thinning trees, and painting picnic tables in Pattee Canyon, staining fences in Blue Mountain Recreation Area, and repairing trails in the Rattlesnake National Recreation and Wilderness. "The kids really like the work," says Erin Williams, program coordinator for the Homes for Kids Foster Care Program, a division of MYH.



Joe Kipphut at left with MYH volunteers.

"They've learned a lot."

Joe nominated the group under Category 7, Youth Volunteer Service. The group will receive the Forest Service National Plaque for Exemplary Service, signed by Chief Mike Dombeck, and a congratulatory letter. The plaque and letter will be presented June 9 at the annual meeting of the MYH board.

Nature Watch Honors Laughlin

by Terri Marceron, Livingston district
ranger Gallatin National Forest

Scott Laughlin, information assistant for the the Livingston Ranger District, Gallatin National Forest, recently received a national NatureWatch award for his successful "Celebrating Wildflowers" program in the local schools in 1997. Last year, Scott sponsored a poster contest that reached 1,105 kids in the Livingston area from grades K-5.

The program, started by Sandy Kratville with three local schools in 1994, has since grown to involve a total of nine schools in the surrounding community. This year home schoolers were invited to participate as well.

The competition involves the children drawing or "coloring in" posters for Celebrating Wildflowers Week. It is designed to promote and educate youth in the diversity of plants and habitats in the Gallatin forest area.



The proud winners! Photo by Thomas Lee, the Livingston Enterprise.

This year's competition was as successful as last year's, with winners from each grade receiving a ribbon, flower, wildflower book, and recognition for their efforts. Most of the prizes are donated by local merchants. Also impressive and important in involving the public is Scott's recruitment of local businesspeople as poster judges. Many judges are returnees and look forward to each year's event.

Scott was caught completely by surprise when the certificate and a watch (with a cardinal on the face!) from the NatureWatch program was presented to him at the district's monthly meeting in April—a well-deserved "thank you" for coordinating such an important outreach program.

Fire Research and Education

"Too Interesting to keep to ourselves"

The Rocky Mountain Research Station's Fires Sciences Lab (FSL) conducts research on fire in the ecosystem, but staff want to make sure the product of the research reaches the public - including children.

"Fire science is too interesting for researchers to keep it to themselves," says FSL ecologist Jane Kapler Smith. Which is why she and FSL technician Nancy McMurray became involved in developing *FireWorks*. They conceived the idea, developed a few prototype lessons and materials, and then found grants to fund the project's development.

FireWorks is a trunk full of educational materials about fire. The main purpose is to have teachers use it with their students in the classrooms. It can also be adapted for use by environmental educators, interpreters, and community groups. *FireWorks* doesn't necessarily require a field trip, which can be expensive. However, "A field trip is a great way to complete the students' experience," Jane is quick to add. The curricula will suggest activities for field trips.

The *FireWorks* trunk itself includes such things as fire-scarred tree "cookies" or cross sections, cones and bark samples for tree identification, and lots of pictures, posters, and books. It also contains hardware and materials for investigating combustion, the flammability of various fuels, and the influence of slope on fire behavior. The curricula that come with the trunk (one written for grades 1-5 and one for grades 6-9) tell how to use each item in the classroom.

But does it work?

This spring, *FireWorks* is being used by pilot teachers in eight schools in R-1, involving about 400 students. Using a scientific approach to the project, Jane and Nancy wanted to make sure that monitoring was part of the project. The Bitterroot Ecosystem Management Research Project provided the funds to evaluate the trunk's effectiveness at the 7th grade level by asking questions in the field.



Teachers at *FireWorks* workshop learning about the "tinker tree." Exercise is to demonstrate the relationship of a tree's design to its ability to withstand fire.

"Tell me about one part of this shrub that is likely to survive most fires." Nancy figures she asked this question 57 times on field trips to Pattee Canyon and the Thompson River. Students from surrounding communities answered 30 such questions at information stations on each field trip.

Mike Ablutz, Tricia O'Connor, Gary Lynam, John Waverek, Terry Diamond, and Jeff Barney, all from the Lolo National Forest, helped with the trips. Professor James Walsh and doctoral student Linda Terwilliger from the University of Montana Department of Psychology are conducting the evaluation.

The project should be completed by next year and made available to teachers and agency staff throughout Regions 1 and 4. Three workshops on *FireWorks* are scheduled for this summer and fall. All will be held at the Fire Lab, 5775 W. Hwy 10, Missoula, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The dates are:

- Tuesday, July 14, for teachers of grades 6-9
- Thursday, July 16, for teachers of grades 1-5
- Tuesday, October 20, for environmental educators & interpreters

If you are interested in learning about the trunk or the workshops, please contact Jane at 406/329-4805 or Nancy at 406/329-4809, or via IBM (jsmith/rmrs, missoula or nmcmurray/rmrs, missoula).

Huge Audience Sees Bear Exhibit



Volunteer Gary Grocholski (left) explaining the "Bear Us In Mind" program to scouts.

Every March, the Billings area Boy Scouts of America schedules a show for all the scouts in southcentral Montana for a day. Each troop or den is allowed to set up a booth to display a theme or activity. This annual show, which attracts 4,000-5,000 people each year, is open to the general public.

Since 1989, the Billings area scouting organization has donated booth space to the Custer National Forest. This year, due to popular demand, the theme of the display was "Bear Us in Mind." This display is a spin-off of a popular "bear aware" program that Tom Alt and his educational cadre of summer employees and volunteers have developed for the Billings area over the last 12 years.

The display this year was made much more interesting and attractive to the scouts and general public by special visual aids made possible through funding from the National Grizzly Bear Program through the Regional Office. The additions included such items as bear skulls, bear tracks, poster boards, handout material and a bear trap.

For nine years, Tom coordinated this Forest Service conservation education effort. Even though he retired last winter, Tom was back again this spring, with help from volunteer Gary Grocholski.

International Migratory Bird Day



May 9 marked the celebration of International Migratory Bird Day. The Forest Service is part of the Partners in Flight organization which promotes the recognition of Neotropical migratory birds. This is the eighth year for Partners in Flight and their effort to bring together Federal and state agencies, corporations, and private groups to cooperatively conserve birds and their habitat.

This year's theme was "Catch the Migration Sensation." Beth Paragamian, Watchable Wildlife coordinator for the IPNF, found an excellent way to reach the public. She distributed placemats, printed by the Watchable Wildlife program, to participating restaurants all over northern Idaho. So while hungry diners wait patiently for their food, in some restaurants they can read interesting facts about migratory birds!

Among participating establishments are many owner-operated Mexican restaurants, which highlights the tie between the birds' summer breeding areas in the U.S. and their wintering grounds in Mexico or Central America.

For a free issue of "Bird Conservation," the official Partners in Flight magazine, write to: Bird Conservation, American Bird Conservancy, 1250 24th St., NW, Suite 400, Washington DC 20037.

P.S. Have you seen the neat Migratory Bird Day poster? Be sure to read the fascinating information on bird migration on the back. For copies, check with your local SO information desk. If they don't have a supply, call the RO information desk at 406/329-3511.

Clearwater Hosts Educational Fair

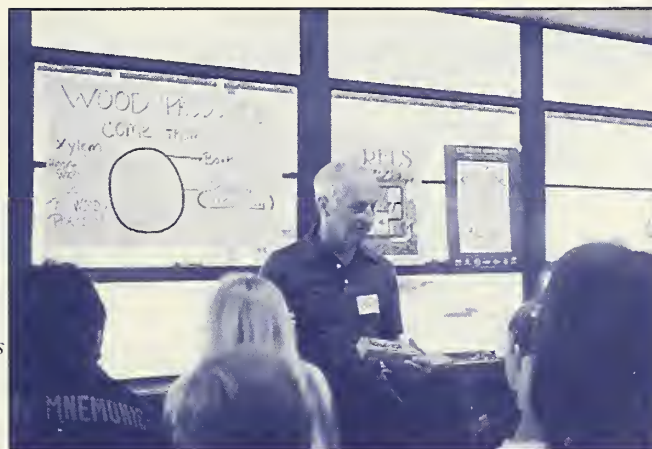
by Sandi McFarland, archaeologist
Clearwater National Forest

A total of 13 schools took part in the second annual Farm and Forestry Fair in March, co-sponsored by the Clearwater National Forest. The fair is a hands-on educational experience for area fifth graders.

The activity included an hour and a half guided tour of nine learning stations. Students heard about a variety of crops, livestock, and forest products from the Clearwater area.

SO forestry technician Mark Klinke and forester Myra Theimer, North Fork Ranger District, presented "Identify the Trees." The two taught around 400 students how to identify nine local tree species and passed along a few interesting facts about each tree.

*Clearwater NF
forester John Case
talks about products
from trees.*



SO forester John Case joined forces with Mary Nedoma, Idaho Department of Lands, to explain what common products come from different parts of a tree. The youngsters also examined tree "cookies," or slices, to count tree rings. They could determine a tree's age and speculate on its history through fire scars and wide rings signifying growth spurts.

Weed coordinator Chris Kuykendall teamed up with range conservationist Leonard Lake, Nez Perce National Forest, to present a program on noxious weeds. They explained where the weeds come from

and how they arrive in an area. They talked about how to prevent the weeds from spreading and how to control them: manually, chemically, and with biological agents (the "bugs" that are the weeds' natural enemies).

It was a great effort that, over time, will build some level of appreciation and understanding of what resource conservation is all about.

A Thing of Beauty - and a Fund Raiser

by Harry Mitchell, volunteer
Lewis and Clark Fund, Inc.

One of the first of many outstanding features to catch your eyes upon entering the new Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center in Great Falls is the 18-foot compass rose just inside the lobby door on the main floor. It is composed of 568 individually-named tiles in four concentric circles. Each circle is a different color which in turn is separated by naturally-colored stone borders. The widest border tells the Lewis and Clark story in Indian pictographs.

While very beautiful, the primary purpose of the compass rose was to raise funds to build a magnificent interpretive center. As most Montanans already know, the 100th



Photo of the compass rose at the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center in Great Falls, MT.

Congress (1988) appropriated \$3 million dollars for this project—if local Lewis and Clark enthusiasts could and would raise an additional \$3 million non-Federal dollars. Many considered this impossible in “remote Montana” with only about 850,000 citizens, but collectively, we “rose” to the challenge. The compass rose project was one of many money-raising efforts that resulted in amassing the \$3 million match.

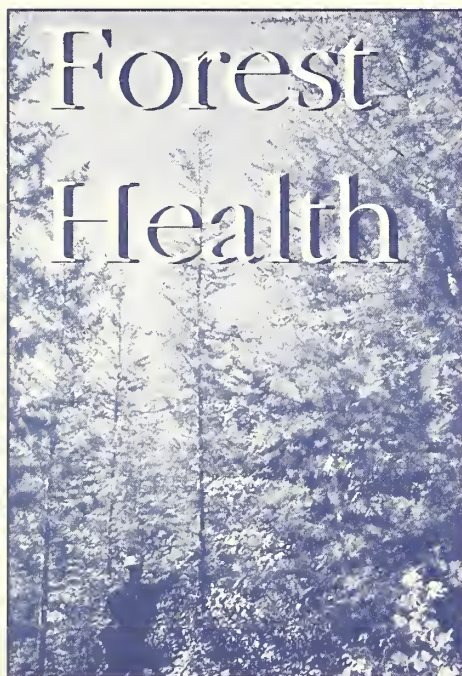
Between June and the end of December, 1995, a total of 568 tiles were sold, raising

more than \$328,000. The tiles were in four categories and sizes: the largest 40 tiles at \$2,500 each; 80 at \$1,000 each; 144 at \$500 each; and the smallest 304 tiles for \$250 each. Each purchaser designed his/her own tile (within word limitations) with an interesting and illuminating result.

For me, the Lewis and Clark compass rose is a classic example of strong public support for a great cause resulting in something of lasting beauty. Visit the center, observe the “rose,” and you decide.



Genetic Sleuthing Aids



Mary Frances Mahalovich, RO geneticist
Moscow, Idaho.

When certain tree species fall victim to specific diseases or blights, the ramifications can be considerable to wildlife and the ecosystem. Watching the progress of a disease, studying the implications, looking for disease-resistant seed is an important aspect of the work of the Forest Service - and Region 1.

It was just about a year ago that the Northern Region released a news bulletin on needle diseases, identified by brown shadings in the forest, particularly in western larch. RO pathologist Jane Taylor described needle cast as “characterized by individual needles developing reddish-brown spots or bands.” Within a month the infected needles drop to the ground.

These needle diseases can be widespread and dramatic in appearance, but there usually is little mortality,” Jane says. “The diseases may result in growth reduction in individual trees, but very little is known about the long-term effects of these diseases on growth and timber production.” Needle cast

can be a problem both in nurseries and in the field, whereas needle blight, is more prevalent in the field.

The Northern Region is actively involved in a tree improvement program for western larch. The genetic testing program has identified families of trees and individuals that exhibit moderate levels of disease resistance to needle blight at the Alexander Creek genetic test site on the Kootenai National Forest, and needle cast in three, Coeur d’Alene Nursery genetic test sites.

Use of improved seed for wildlife habitat improvement, watershed restoration and reforestation will help off-set these forest health problems in our Idaho and Montana forests, as well as minimize the application of chemicals in the nursery. The Idaho seed orchards are located at Grouse Creek Tree Improvement Area on the IPNFs and the Montana seed orchards reside at Bigfork Tree Improvement Area on the Flathead National Forest.

Silviculturist Gary Dickerson, Kootenai National Forest, and forest technician Ray Holt, Libby Ranger District, will continue to monitor Alexander Creek genetic test site to help answer Jane’s question on the long-term effects of these diseases in western larch.

Stan Tubbs, Libby RD, standing next to one of the superior western larch trees in the Alexander Creek test.

Photo by Mary Mahalovich.

WO Gets Steve Solem



Steve Solem

Steve Solem, acting director of R-1's Information Systems since June 1997, will be moving on to the Washington Office to become assistant director for the Resource Information Group. The unit is under the Ecosystem Management Coordination Staff, headed by former R-1 deputy regional for-ester Chris Risbrudt.

Recently established, the Resource Information Group is responsible for establishing and maintaining standards for corporate information, developing and maintaining corporate data bases for a wide range of information needs and improving corporate information to meet agency needs.

Steve's other previous jobs in the RO include: deputy director for Ecosystem Assessment and Planning (1995-97) and Regional Appeals and Litigation Coordinator (1991-95). During this period he also had a tour of duty as acting forest supervisor, Custer National Forest and Grasslands; and acting forest supervisor, Kootenai National Forest. Other positions: Clearwater district ranger, Nez Perce National Forest (1985-91); resource assistant, Rocky Mountain Ranger District (1980-85); and assistant forest planner, Lewis and Clark National Forest (1977-1980). He also worked seasonally for the Lolo's Missoula Ranger District and the Fortine and Fisher River Ranger District, Kootenai National Forest.

Steve's wife **Jane Solem** has worked as a program assistant, Missoula Fire Sciences Lab; information receptionist, Lolo National Forest; and support staff in Recreation, Lands, Minerals, Wilderness, and Heritage Programs. Steve and Jane will be moving to DC and leaving their daughters in Missoula and Bozeman. Kerry is presently working as office manger for ASUM Legal Services, having graduated from UM-College of Technology's Legal Assisting program. Jill is a sophomore in studio art at MSU-Bozeman.

A reunion for current and former employees of the **Colville National Forest** will be held Friday, June 26 through Sunday, June 28, at the Northeast Washington Fairgrounds pavilion in Colville, Washington.

If you plan to attend, please preregister and prepay via the mail. Registration packets (including tickets for all prepaid activities) will be available at the pavilion beginning at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, June 26. Lots of fun activities are scheduled, including great food, live music and dancing, golf tournament, and a "relay for life," for the American Cancer Society.

R-1 employees have an open invitation to the **IPNF employee picnic**, to be held on Sunday, August 2 at the Sunrise day-use area, Farragut State Park. There will be planned activities for both children and adults. Hamburgers, hotdogs, lemonade, plates and utensils will be provided. Attendees are asked to bring a salad, dessert, or dish to share. Farragut is an alcohol-free facility.

Festivities will begin around 10 a.m. on Sunday, although folks are welcome to arrive and camp for the whole weekend. For camping reservations, call 208/683-2425. Cost is \$3.00 per car to get into the park.

Boy Scouts Help Design, Build Picnic Sites

*by Mark Mason, recreation specialist
Three Rivers Ranger District, Kootenai National Forest*

The Three Rivers Ranger District had help from local Boy Scout Troop 1924 in creating two picnic sites at a popular lake located near Troy, Montana. Troop member Kevin Grabinski was working on completing requirements for becoming an Eagle Scout and led the troop in this project. With support from the Three Rivers District, Kevin assisted in designing the work for the site.

Kevin planned the work schedule and he and the troop completed the work on site. Work consisted of clearing and pil-ling a heavily brushed area, installing a culvert and trail over a small creek, and

Short Notes



Missoula smokejumpers are among the stars of a documentary mini-series that debuted March 7 on the Learning Channel. "Boot Camp" is a four-part look at what it takes to train for some of the nation's most strenuous and also dangerous careers.

The smokejumper program followed rookie jumpers through training and included footage from Missoula's smokejumper base. Veteran jumper Wayne Williams provided the historical narrative on smokejumping and the two fires that killed firefighters—Mann Gulch in 1949 and Storm King Mountain in 1994.

Wilderness and Land Ethic Curriculum Teacher Workshop will be held July 27-30 at the Forest Service Condon Work Center, Condon, MT, Hwy 83, milemarker 43. Fee is \$25 payable to the Swan Ecosystem Center. Meals, lodging, instruction and materials provided. DEADLINE: July 6. Contact Sway Ecosystem Ctr, 406/754-3137; e-mail: swanec@montana.com.



PHOTO - Back Row L to R - James Newstrom, Jansen Kelsey, Barrett Volkmann, Matt Riffle, Front Row L to R - Tim Eitemme, Jimmy Glass, Matt McRill, Matt Palmer, Keegan Boyd, and

putting in picnic tables and fire rings. Kevin and the rest of the troop did an outstanding job. Many thanks to Troop 1924 and congratulations to Kevin on his Eagle Scout Badge!

Personnel Actions

BEAVERHEAD - DEERLODGE NATIONAL FOREST

Awards and Promotions

BUNCE, JOHN, Land Surveyor, SO Annex, QSI
LAMBERT, GARY, Forestry Technician, Career
Conditional Appointment, Phillipsburg RD

BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST

Awards & Promotions

ANDREWS, KEN, realty specialist, SO,
performance award
BITTERMAN, DEAN, helicopter manager, SO,
promotion
BROWN, GARY, forestry technician, Stevensville
RD, QSI
CALLANTINE, KIM, forestry technician, West
Fork RD, promotion
CALLANTINE, KIM, forestry technician, West
Fork RD, QSI
CAMPBELL, DAVE, district ranger, West Fork
RD, promotion
CHRIST, JEWEL, community health nurse,
Anaconda JCC, time limited promotion
DECKER, RUTH, training technician, Trapper
Creek JCC, performance award
ERDMAN, DON, manpower development
specialist, Trapper Creek JCC, time limited
promotion
GRAYSON, NANCY, computer assistant, West
Fork RD, quality step increase
GUZMAN, FRANK, rangeland management
specialist, Darby RD, promotion
HALEY, BILL, civil engineering technician, SO,
QSI
HAMMEL, BONNIE, community health nurse,
Trapper Creek JCC, QSI
MAJORS, MARCIA, teacher, Trapper Creek JCC,
performance award
MARIN, MARTY, civil engineering technician,
SO, performance award
MARTZ, PEGGY, administrative officer, Trapper
Creek JCC, performance award
MILLER, KENT, land surveyor, SO, QSI
MIRAMANTEZ, ROB, forestry technician, Darby
RD, promotion
MORGAN, RONNIE, cook foreman, Anaconda
JCC, time limited promotion
MYERS, LES, training instructor, Trapper Creek
JCC, performance award
ORMISTON, JOHN, wildlife biologist, Sula RD,
QSI
PLYMPTON, HELGA, computer specialist, SO,
performance award
ROSE, SUE, computer assistant, SO, performance
award
SHELMERDINE, PHIL, forestry technician,
Darby RD, promotion
SHOOK, LYSLE, gardener training leader, Trapper
Creek JCC, performance award
STROUSE, MICHELLE, forestry technician,
Darby RD, promotion
TAYLOR, CARY, forestry technician, Darby RD,
promotion
TESDAL, MARTY, telecommunication specialist,
SO, performance award
THOMAS, KIM, forestry technician, Darby RD,
promotion
WAGNER, TOM, district ranger, Darby RD,
promotion
WINDHORST, BRUCE, supervisory forestry
technician, West Fork RD, QSI

New Employees

BUSH, JENNIFER, forestry technician, West Fork
RD
HALEY, JILL, guidance counselor, Anaconda JCC
MADSEN, AARON, assistant helicopter manager,
SO
STUCKER, VERLA, personnel clerk, SO, term
appointment
WEGNER, MELISSA, forestry technician, Darby
RD

Reassignments

BAILEY, CLIFF, automotive worker, Helena NF,
reassignment, SO
DARDES, MICHAEL, forestry technician, Rio
Grande NF, reassignment, West Fork RD
HAZELBAKER, NICK, forestry technician, Nez
Perce NF, reassignment, West Fork RD
HOAG, BART, AFMO, Santa Fe NF, reassign-
ment, West Fork RD
MABBOTT, CHARLES, forestry technician, Nez
Perce NF, reassignment, West Fork RD

GALLATIN NATIONAL FOREST

Awards and Promotions

BENES, STAN, District Ranger, Hebgen Lake RD,
performance award
CRAIG, BILL, Lead Forestry Technician, Hebgen
Lake RD, performance award
JONES, FRED, Forester, Hebgen Lake RD,
promotion, AFMO, Bozeman RD
TUHILL, COLLEEN, Personnel Clerk, SO,
promotion
VanAUSDOL, MARTY, Supervisory Surveying
Technician, Career Conditional Appt, Surveying
Technician, SO

Reassignments and Transfers

BRICKELL, TIMOTHY, AFMO, Clearwater NF,
reassignment, Bozeman RD
HARDIN, GENE, Forester, Targee NF, reassign-
ment, Hebgen Lake RD

HELENA NATIONAL FOREST

Awards and Promotions

BROWN, GARY, FMO, Townsend RD,
promotion
MAFFAI, ED, forestry technician, Colville to SO,
promotion

KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST

Awards & Promotions

BARRETT, MARTHA, financial assistant, SO, to
budget and accounting analyst, temporary
promotion
BOGIE, PATRICIA, resource clerk, Libby RD,
promotion to resource technician
DESY, PIPER, supervisory budget & accounting
analyst, SO, promotion to budget analyst, R9,
Hiawatha NF
DICKERSON, GARY, supervisory forester, Libby
RD, promotion to forester, SO
NELSON, JOE, maintenance worker, Fortine RD,
promotion to automotive worker
ROMEY, MARK, forester, R9, Huron Mannistee
NF, promotion to operations staff officer

New Employees

APPLEHANS, WARREN, forestry technician,
Rexford RD
CHAPMAN, DIANA, forestry technician, Fortine
RD

GOINS, CAMERON, forestry technician, Libby
RD
HALL, WENDY, forestry technician, Cabinet RD
HUTTA, PAUL, forestry technician, Rexford RD
JOHNSON, KENT, computer assistant, SO
MARTENS, MATTHEW, forestry technician,
Libby RD
REDMAN, DAVID, forestry technician, Three
Rivers RD
RIDER, GRANT, forestry technician, Libby RD
ROSE, DANIEL, forestry technician, Three
Rivers RD

Reassignments & Transfers

BUTTS, MARCELLA, forester, Fortine RD,
reassignment
DAVIS, KONI, business management clerk, Three
Rivers RD, promotion to communications operator,
Mt Rainier NP
HILL, KATRINA, resource technician, Fortine
RD, reassignment
SHOTZBERGER, DEENA, supervisory forester,
Libby RD, reassignment
STEVENSON, JEFF, forestry technician, Aerial
Fire Depot, to forestry technician, Three Rivers
RD

Resignations

PRICE, MARY, computer assistant, Libby RD

LEWIS & CLARK NATIONAL FOREST

Awards and promotions

FORTUNE, WILLIAM, District Ranger, Judith
and Musselshell RD, Special Act Award
GREER, JOHN, supervisory forester, SO, QSI
NEWTON, RICHARD, archeologist, SO,
promotion
SCHMOYER-WEBER, JANE, National Historic
Trail Interpretive Center Director, promotion

New Employees

REYNOLDS, DARWIN, forestry technician,
Musselshell RD

Reassignments and transfers

KIRPACH, GARY, FMO, Okanogan to Stanford
RD, reassignment

Dick Krebill Retires

Dick Krebill, assistant director of the Rocky Mountain Research Station and former R-1 employee, retired in April after 36 years with the Forest Service. After earning a Ph.D. in pathology, Dick joined the Intermountain Research Station in 1962 as a plant pathologist. He later worked in Washington D.C. with the Disease Research staff and as staff assistant to the Forest Service Deputy Chief for Research. In 1977 he relocated to Arizona and the Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station. Dick transferred to Missoula in 1982 as assistant director of the Intermountain Research Station. His position was later relocated to the station headquarters in Ogden, Utah. The Intermountain and Rocky Mountain Research Stations merged in 1997.



IN MEMORIAM

Phyllis Hegg Brown, 87, of Billings, died May 8. She was born in Beloit, Wisconsin, moving to a homestead in the Broadview, Montana area in 1915. In 1938, she married Joseph Brown, who died in 1981. Phyllis worked for Montgomery Wards until moving to Billings in 1956 when she went to work for the Custer National Forest. She is survived by four sisters, Mrs. Frances Bittner, Mrs. Naomi Haugrud, Mrs. Mary Davies, and Mrs. Louis Morin.

Grant M. Grover, 74, passed away at his home March 22, in Townsend, Montana, following a long battle with cancer. Grant was born in Gartland, Utah. He served in the Army Air Corps from 1943-46, a participant in the China-India-Burma campaign during World War II. In 1953, he came to Montana and worked for Grover Motor Company. From 1962 until his retirement in 1980, he worked for the Townsend Ranger District, Helena National Forest in range management.

Grant and his wife enjoyed spending winters in California and summers at their home in Montana. He loved hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, and four-wheeling with his family and friends. Survivors include his wife Mildred and their six children: Darlene Ursick of Helena; Frank of Lolo; Marilyn Moore of Roy, Utah; Carolyn Bury of Paso Robles, California; David of Tucson; and June of Oregon.

Jim Guest, born in San Francisco June 4, 1942, died at his home in Canyon Creek near Helena, on March 5, 1998. Jim earned his Ph.D. in range management from the University of Wyoming in 1971, then began employment with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department as State habitat biologist. In 1976, Jim began his career with the Forest Service as a range conservationist on the Shoshone National Forest, then as district ranger for the Mark Twain National Forest in Missouri. Other positions include resources staff officer, Salmon National Forest, R-4; director, range program, R-6. Jim finished his Forest Service career in 1997 as the natural resources team leader for the Helena National Forest, serving a portion of that time as the forest supervisor. After retiring in June, 1997, Jim began his own successful consulting business, Canyon Creek Natural Resources, with his family.

He is survived by his wife Roseva, son Andrew of Bozeman, daughter Kristina of Missoula, and his mother. On behalf of Jim, the Guest family asks that as we take time to enjoy the outdoors, we think of Jim and value and protect the land as he did.

William "Bill" Lovingood, 86, of Hamilton, died May 1 in Hamilton. Originally from Madisonville, Tennessee, Bill moved as a child to Colorado, later to Idaho, and eastern Montana, before coming to the Bitterroot Valley at 16. He farmed with his father and also

worked for the Forest Service fighting fires during the summer. He entered the U.S. Navy in 1944 and served on an aircraft carrier in the Asiatic, Pacific and Philippines theatres. Following his discharge in 1945, he returned to the Burnt Fork area to farm, later working in the lumber industry. He also was employed by the Bitterroot National Forest in the Magruder and Paradise areas, as well as the Job Corps. He retired in the mid-1960s.

Survivors include his wife Hazel, daughter Connie of Hamilton; and sister Dorothy Luedecke of Hamilton.

Robert Henry Morrison, 81, of Huson, Montana, passed away May 11 in Missoula. Born in Dixon, Montana, Robert worked at several farm and ranch jobs before serving in the U.S. Army from 1941-45 in Italy and the Aleutian Islands. He attained the rank of sergeant and was awarded the Bronze Star. Bob worked many years in ranching in Idaho and California before returning to Montana in 1955. He later worked for the Forest Service as a road maintenance foreman, packer and fire crew liaison officer. He retired from the agency in 1978.

For much of his life, Bob was a cowboy and his love for this lifestyle remained in his heart all his life. He is survived by sons Robert and David.

Frank Henry Nickerson, 85, of Missoula, died April 24 from complications following surgery for lung cancer. Born in Plentywood, Montana, he joined the CCC in 1934 at Fort Missoula. He worked for the Forest Service in Missoula as a heavy equipment operator and mechanic from 1936-51, except for the period 1942-44 when he served in the U.S. Army. He was employed as a heavy equipment mechanic in Greenland, Missoula, and Bakersfield, California, until his retirement in the late 1970s.

He is survived by his three grandchildren, Jason Nickerson, Sarah LaChance, and Nathan Nickerson of Missoula.

Edward W. Schilke, 74, of Hamilton, Montana, died May 8 at his home. Born in Scobey, Montana, Ed graduated from high school in Hamilton. He served with the U.S. Army from 1943-46, with the 2nd Armored Corps, 97th Division. He moved back to Hamilton in 1947 and worked for the Forest Service at Magruder, Darby, Sula and Stevensville as headquarters guard for fire control. He later returned to California and worked for the Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Co., until his retirement in 1978. He later owned and operated the Big Sky Trailer Village at Grantsdale, MT.

He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and spending time at his cabin in the East Fork. He is survived by his wife Ellen; daughters Susan France of Hamilton and Linda Potts of Creswell, Oregon; son Kelly of Coeur d'Alene; stepson Michael; and sister Elizabeth Eichholz of Glens Ferry, Idaho.

Winston E. "Curly" Steuerwald, 83, died of cancer May 17 in Missoula. He was born in Clay County, Indiana. He joined the CCC upon graduation from high school, which ultimately brought him to Missoula in 1935, where he began working for the Forest Service in engineering and aerial service. During World War II, Curly served as an army engineer attached to the Air Force. He was a still photographer in the Pacific theater and was awarded several honors, including the American Theater Service Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Service Medal, and the Victory Medal.

After the war, Curly returned to the Forest Service where he worked for 37 years as regional photographer in the Public Information Office. Following his retirement in 1972, he and his wife Helen spent 25 years traveling and wintering in Yuma, Arizona. He is survived by his wife Helen of 59 years, son Gary and daughter Janis Jette, all of Polson.

Charles Edward Withers, 89, passed away April 6 in Spokane. Born in Prescott, Washington, Charles spent the first 20 years of his adult life on a 40-acre farm near Ferndale, Washington, after service in the U.S. Marines, 1924-28. From 1948-56, Charles was employed as an independent contractor-carpenter in the St. Maries, Idaho, area. In 1956 he began work for the Forest Service for the St. Joe National Forest at Clarkia, Idaho. For 23 years, he served as construction supervisor for the St. Joe, retiring in 1971. He worked at several ranger stations, building numerous campgrounds and other facilities, running blister rust crews, and other related work. For his work, Charles received a Regional Forester's appreciation award in 1975.

After his retirement, Charles lived in Coeur d'Alene and enjoyed elk hunting and fishing. Survivors include his son Weston, in Spokane, and his children Leona and Shirley; and a daughter Lavon Michalisko, in California, and her children David and Nathan George and Robin Michalisko.

J. Franklin Wolfe, 70, of Stevensville, died April 2 at home with his family. He had been battling lymphoma since 1995. Born in Quincy, Florida, Frank grew up in Sylacauga, Alabama. He served in the U.S. Navy in the 1940s. In 1951 he married Frances Kelly and they moved to Missoula two years later in 1953. He enrolled at the University of Montana and, in 1954, began work as a temporary for the Forest Service as a smokejumper. In 1956, Frank secured a permanent position in the engineering division of the RO as a draftsman in the cartographic section. By the time of his retirement around 1985, he headed the drafting group within the cartographic section.

Survivors include his wife Fran of Polson, son Mark of Whitefish, daughters Diane McCormick of Polson and Karen Wolfe-Dodge of Mountain View, California, as well as two sisters and four grandchildren.

Burn continued from page 1

will greatly increase the shrub production of the area. Mule deer, elk, mountain goats and black bear will benefit from this forage improvement on their winter ranges.

The fire also accomplished the objectives for reducing ladder fuels and the risk to firefighter safety. Much of the Douglas-fir ladder fuels were burned, eliminating the risk of a crown fire in 90 percent of the area. This effect should provide a benefit for fire safety within the interface area for at least 20 years.

The Bitterroot Range has a long history of fire as an integral ecosystem component. In recent times, many people have been attracted by the natural beauty for home sites at the foot of these mountains. When a wildfire starts in an area such as this that has been treated with prescribed burning, there is less risk someone may lose their life or home.

The 1,700 acres composing the Big Creek burn represents a small part of the urban interface that needs the return of fire, and this burn, along with others planned for coming years, will help meet our objectives for safety and ecosystem sustainability.

Smoke will continue to be a sensitive issue that needs to be addressed and disclosed to the public up-front, along with the trade-offs and benefits of fire in the ecosystem.

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INTO THE PAST

Several people correctly identified the photo in the last NRN issue. The first respondee was Garry Seloske, fisheries biologist with the Salmon River Ranger District, Nez Perce National Forest, who identified the building as the old Slate Creek Ranger Station as it sat on its original location. Garry even gave us the correct date of the photo - May 6, 1923. The photographer was Clyde Fickes.

The ranger station, built near the Little Van Buren Creek, a tributary of Slate Creek, is now located 5 miles distant. It's just off Idaho Hwy 95 at milepost 214, on the compound of the Salmon River Ranger District a few yards south of Slate Creek. It presently is a museum, illustrating early life in the Forest Service.

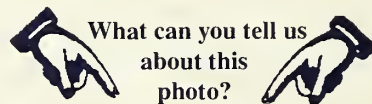
We also heard from:

Lynn Catherman, retiree from Kooskia, Idaho: "It was built in 1909. In 1975 it was dismantled by the Nez Perce I.R. crew and moved to the present Slate Creek Station and reassembled. I was the crew boss in charge."

Vergil Lindsey, from Ennis, Montana: "Even if I'm wrong in my guess, this photo brought back a lot of good memories of the Slate Creek District."

Bob Abbott, from Grangeville, Idaho: "Built in 1909 about 6 miles up Slate Creek from its confluence with the Salmon River, this building served as the ranger's home as well as the office headquarters for the district. A daughter was born in the upstairs bedroom."

Judy York, information assistant, Sandpoint Ranger District: "I recognize the...old Slate Creek Ranger Station, now currently a museum....I know because in 1988, I redesigned the interpretive display inside the building and learned a lot about the history in the process."



What can you tell us
about this
photo?



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